

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 FRANKF 02957 091015Z

16

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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R 090915Z MAY 74

FM AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7110

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

US MISSION BERLIN 451

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

POLAD USAFE

POLAD USAREUR

POLAD USEUCOM

C O N F I D E N T I A L FRANKFURT 2957

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: SPD REACTIONS TO BRANDT'S RESIGNATION

1. SUMMARY: SOUTH HESSEN AND FRANKFURT SPD LEADERS, WHO PROUDLY IDENTIFY WITH LEFT WING OF PARTY, DEEPLY SHOCKED BY BRANDT'S RESIGNATION. PUBLICLY ACCUSING CDU/CSU AND QUOTE OTHER REACTIONARY FORCES IN FRG AND GDR UNQUOTE OF EXPLOITING GUILLAUME SPY CASE FOR POLICIAL PURPOSES, AREA SPD LEADERS HAVE RUSHED TO BRANDT'S DEFENSE IN HOPES OF STRENGTHENING HIS POSITION AS PARTY CHAIRMAN IN ORDER TO RESTRAIN RIGHTIST RESURGENCE REPRESENTED BY SCHMIDT'S ASCENDANCY TO CHANCELLORSHIP. PRIVATELY, CHAIRMAN OF FRANKFURT SPD SEES POSSIBILITY THAT CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP COULD IMPROVE SPD PERFORMANCE AND PROSPECTS. SPD LEFT WING WILL HOLD NATIONWIDE MEETING

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PAGE 02 FRANKF 02957 091015Z

IN FRANKFURT MAY 18-19 TO DISCUSS CONSEQUENCES AND

COUNTERMEASURES TO EVENTS OF PAST FEW DAYS. END SUMMARY.

2. REVELATION THAT GUILLAUME AND WIFE WERE GDR AGENTS HIT FRANKFURT PARTICULARLY HARD SINCE THEY LIVED HERE FOURTEEN YEARS AND HELD TOP FUNCTIONARY POSITIONS IN FRANKFURT SPD BEFORE IT COMPLETELY DOMINATED BY LEFT WING. HE MOST CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH RIGHT WING FIGURES SUCH AS GEORG LEBER AND GERHARD WECK (WHO DIED LESS THAN MONTH BEFORE SPIES ARRESTED. GUILLAUME REPORTEDLY REPRESENTED BRANDT AT WECK'S FUNERAL APRIL 4 IN FRANKFURT.) ALTHOUGH PRESENT LEFTIST LEADERSHIP WAS OFTEN TARGET OF GUILLAUME'S HOSTILITY. THERE HAVE THUS FAR BEEN NO SIGNS OF SCHADENFREUDE BUT ONLY OF SHOCKED INCREDULITY. ARNDT POINTED OUT THAT SOUTH HESSEN SPD HAD NOT QUOTE SENT UNQUOTE GUILLAUME TO BONN; HE HAD BEEN SUMMONED THERE BY QUOTE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH HESSEN MINORITY UNQUOTE (READ LEBER). FRANKFURT SPD INITIATED STEPS LAST WEEK TO EXPEL GUILLAUME FROM PARTY BUT FOUND TO ITS RELIEF THAT HE HAD TRANSFERRED HIS MEMBERSHIP TO BAD GODESBERG IN 1971.

3. BRANDT'S RESIGNATION AS CHANCELLOR PROVIDED LOCAL SPD WITH SECOND PROFOUND SHOCK IN LESS THAN TWO WEEKS, ONE TO WHICH THEY WERE BOUND TO REACT. IN STATEMENTS ELICITED BY THE PRESS DURING THE FIRST FEW HOURS, HESSEN MINISTER-PRESIDENT (AND SOUTH HESSEN SPD CHAIRMAN) OSSWALD, FRANKFURT LORD MAYOR (AND SOUTH HESSEN PARTY DEPUTY CHAIRMAN) ARNDT, FRANKFURT SPD CHAIRMAN GEBHARDT, AND HESSEN DGB CHAIRMAN CLAUSS RATHER UNIFORMLY CLAIMED THAT QUOTE PARTY POLITICAL EXPLOITATION UNQUOTE OF THE SPY AFFAIR HAD BEEN MERELY THE LATEST INSTANCE OF QUOTE TRICKS AND SUBVERSION UNQUOTE BY THE CDU/CSU AND QUOTE OTHER REACTIONARY AND CAPITALIST FORCES UNQUOTE IN THE FRG AND GDR DESIGNED TO BLOCK THE BRANDT GOVERNMENT'S DETENTE AND SOCIAL REFORM POLICIES. A STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE SOUTH HESSEN SPD ACCUSED THE FRG INTELLIGENCE SERVICE (BND) OF QUOTE PLAYING CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 FRANKF 02957 091015Z

SHADOWN GAMES UNQUOTE WITH THE CDU/CSU. BRANDT WAS PRAISED FOR HIS COURAGE AND COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY IN ACCEPTING RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOMETHING OF WHICH HE PERSONALLY WAS INNOCENT.

4. BRANDT SYMPATHY RALLY ADDRESSED BY ARNDT, GEBHARDT AND CLAUSS IN FRONT OF CITY HALL MAY 7 DREW THREE THOUSAND SPECTATORS (INCLUDING A SIZABLE BLOC

OF ANARCHIST STUDENTS WHO HECKLED THE LORD MAYOR.) SENTIMENTS SIMILAR TO THOSE ABOVE WERE EXPRESSED AND COUPLED WITH DEMANDS THAT BRANDT RETAIN SPD CHAIRMANSHIP. OSSWALD HAD STATED EARLIER IN WIESBADEN THAT BRANDT QUOTE OF COURSE UNQUOTE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE MAIN SPEAKER IN HESSEN LANDTAG ELECTION CAMPAIGN THIS AUTUMN AND THAT SCHMIDT WOULD QUOTE ALSO UNQUOTE NOW BE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE. THIS WAS VIRTUALLY THE ONLY PUBLIC REFERENCE TO SCHMIDT BY A LOCAL SPD LEADER SINCE BRANDT'S RESIGNATION.

5. PUBLIC REACTION OF SPD LEADERS OUTSIDE OF FRANKFURT AND WIESBADEN WAS RATHER DIFFERENT. A BRANDT SYMPATHY RALLY IN MAINZ DREW ABOUT TWO THOUSAND. RHEINLAND-PFALZ SPD CHAIRMAN DROESCHER, GENERALLY REGARDED AS LEFTIST BUT ACCUSED BY CLOSE ASSOCIATES OF BEING OPPORTUNIST, THOUGH HE REGRETTED BRANDT'S RESIGNATION, SAW CHANGE AS BRINGING NEW SPIRIT INTO COALITION AND OFFERING GOOD CHANCE FOR SPD ON FEDERAL AND LAND LEVELS. LEFTIST R-P DGB CHAIRMAN LEHLBACH, ON OTHER HAND, SAW BRANDT AS VICTIM OF HATE CAMPAIGN IN GDR AND FRG REACTIONARY CIRCLES. WHILE DARMSTADT DGB CHAIRMAN PERESSIN SAW SOCIAL REFORMS ENDANGERED BY BRANDT'S RESIGNATION, DARMSTADT SPD BUNDESTAG DEPUTY METZGER CONFIDENT SCHMIDT GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE SAME FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC REFORM POLICIES. DARMSTADT LORD MAYOR SABAIIS TOOK THE OCCASION TO APPEAL AGAIN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BRANDT'S 10-POINT-PROGRAM FOR DELINEATION BETWEEN SPD AND LEFTIST EXTREMISTS.

6. IN LENGTHY PRIVATE CONVERSATION MAY 8, GEBHARDT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT BRANDT HAD BEEN CRITICIZED BY BOTH

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 FRANKF 02957 091015Z

WINGS OF THE SPD, FOR LACK OF LEADERSHIP AND THAT GUILLAUME CASE HAD MERELY BEEN QUOTE LAST STRAW UNQUOTE. RESIGNATION MIGHT RECOVER SOME OF FORMER PERSONAL POPULARITY (INDEED, THIRTY PEOPLE WALKED INTO FRANKFURT SPD OFFICE MORNING AFTER ANNOUNCEMENT AND JOINED PARTY), THUS IMPROVING SPD ELECTION PROSPECTS. FURTHERMORE, ALTHOUGH HELMUT SCHMIDT WOULD NEVER BE CHOICE OF SOUTH HESSEN SPD, GEBHARDT ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SCHMIDT WOULD BEING NEW SPIRIT AND EFFICIENCY TO CHANCELLORSHIP THAT COULD ALSO REVIVE FLAGGING SPD POPULARITY.

7. IMMEDIATE GOAL OF LEFT WING, GEBHARDT SAID, WOULD BE TO RETAIN BRANDT AS PARTY CHAIRMAN AND STRENGTHEN HIS POSITION AS COUNTERWEIGHT TO SCHMIDT.

THE QUOTE KANALARBEITERS UNQUOTE AND OTHER RIGHTISTS  
IN THE PARTY MUST BE PREVENTED FROM ANY ATTEMPT TO  
CAPTURE THE CHAIRMANSHIP AS WELL AS THE CHANCELLORSHIP.  
ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED THAT SOME LEFTISTS WOULD  
PREFER A DIFFERENT CHAIRMAN THAN BRANDT, GEBHARDT  
DESCRIBED BRANDT AS THE ONLY FEASIBLE LEADER  
ACCEPTABLE TO THE LEFT AT THIS TIME.

8. GEBHARDT SAID THE QUOTE FRANKFURTER KREIS UNQUOTE  
WOULD CONVENE A NATIONAL MEETING OF LEFTIST SPD  
LEADERS IN FRANKFURT MAY 18-19 TO DISCUSS THE  
CONSEQUENCES OF BRANDT'S RESIGNATION AND WHAT TO DO  
ABOUT IT. (THE GROUP HAS NO FORMAL ORGANIZATION,  
BUT FRANKFURT SPD DEPUTY CHAIRMAN KARSTEN VOIGT ACTS  
AS SECRETARY, AND LEFTISTS FROM VIRTUALLY ALL 22 SPD  
DISTRICTS PARTICIPATE. MINUTES ARE SUBMITTED TO  
NATIONAL SPD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.) HE COULD NOT  
PREDICT THE OUTCOME IN DETAIL, BUT THE OBJECTIVE WOULD  
CLEARLY BE TO BUILD COUNTERPRESSURE AGAINST SCHMIDT'S  
FORCES AND STRENGTHEN BRANDT AND THE LEFT.HARLAN

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## Message Attributes

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